

Creative Writing: Intro to Fiction and Poetry

Section: CRWRI-UA.815.021

Schedule: TR 2-3:15

Room: TBD

Instructor: Rebecca Saltzman

Office Hours: By Appointment

Email: rs6427@nyu.edu

Course Overview & Objective: In this class, you will write original fiction and poetry, give and receive critical feedback, and read a range of short stories and poetry with a writer's attention to the conventions of craft.

Grading

Class Participation: 20%. Group discussion is the foundation of the workshop model. Therefore, your participation is essential to your growth as a writer and the growth of your classmates. I expect everyone in the class to participate each class.

Writing Assignments: 50%. This includes workshop submissions, feedback letters for your classmates, and reading responses.

1) You will submit two original short stories (double-spaced, 1500-5000 words) and four to six original poems (single-spaced, maximum 3 pages-per-poem) over the course of the semester; please bring sixteen hard-copies of your submission to hand out during class exactly one week before your workshop date.

2) Please bring two hard-copies of each feedback letter (300 words minimum) to class on that classmate's workshop day (one for me, and one for your classmate). Be as constructive, specific, and respectful as possible in your feedback letters when critiquing strengths and weaknesses of your classmates' work.

3) Each week, you will be required to write a 400-word response to the assigned readings. You can concentrate on one piece, or compare several. These responses need not be formal analyses. After detailing your general impressions (what resonated with you?), attempt to deconstruct the author's craft techniques, and explain why (or why not) you found their technique effective. Please email me your response by Monday at 5 pm so I have time to read them before Tuesday's discussion. You might find it helpful to bring a print-out of your response to use as a reference during class, though this is not required.

Final Portfolio: 30%. On **Tuesday, December 17**, you will turn in a portfolio containing revisions of at least three of your workshop submissions. Your grade will depend on how effectively you incorporate the feedback you received in class.

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation: Workshops, as well as craft discussions, depend on every student's enthusiastic engagement with the material. Please be physically and mentally present, and please be on time. Two or more instances of lateness will count as an unexcused absence, and only one unexcused absence will be permitted. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a grade decrease: A becomes A-, A- becomes B+, and so on.

Late Work: Will not be accepted. If you are not able to make it to class on the day you have to turn in workshop material, it is your responsibility to notify me and place copies in my mailbox before class.

Technology: No laptops, phones, tablets, or any other electronics will be allowed in class unless otherwise instructed. Make sure to print a physical copy of your readings ahead of time.

Plagiarism: DON'T DO IT Y'ALL. This is a course where creative expression, your own unique voice, is valued above all—isn't that why you're taking it? I have a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy; any instance of plagiarism will be reported to the department. Please read NYU's Academic Integrity Policy: <https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html>

Disability Disclosure Statement: Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980. NYU's Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor New York, NY 10003-6675 Telephone: 212-998-4980 Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114 Web site: <http://www.nyu.edu/csd>

Student Wellness Policy: Unless we see explicit evidence in workshop that the speaker of a work is the writer themselves, we assume the speaker is fictional. However, certain content relating to murder, depression, suicide, sexual assault, or severe mental distress, such as seems to be a possible cry for help, will likely prompt my attention. Please send me an email putting this work in context before submitting work, especially for workshop, that may be interpreted as such. If you do feel you need someone to talk to, please reach out to me and I can guide you to the NYU Wellness Center.

Reading Assignments: The following readings/schedule are subject to change, based on our collective progress & intellectual inquiry. If so, you will be notified in advance. I will provide all PDFs of the readings via the NYU Classes portal but I expect you to print & annotate all the readings and bring them to class to look at during discussions.

Week 1

T--9/3: Introductions, review syllabus, determine workshop groups & presentation dates.
Workshop etiquette hand-out for reference.

R--9/5: Lorrie Moore, "How To Be a Writer," in class readings

Week 2

T--9/10: "A Good Man Is Hard To Find," Flannery O'Connor; "The Lottery," Shirley Jackson

R--9/12: Workshop

Week 3

T--9/17: "Dogs Go Wolf," Lauren Groff; "North Country," Roxane Gay

R--9/19: Workshop

Week 4

T--9/24: Ron Rash, "Speckle Trout." Amy Hempel, "In the Cemetery Where Al Jolson Is Buried."

R--9/26: Workshop

Week 5

T--10/01: "Inventory," Carmen Maria Machado; "Sea Oak" George Saunders

R--10/03: Workshop

Week 6

T-- 10/08: "The Cheater's Guide To Love," Junot Diaz; Flash Fiction and Prose Poetry. "Girl," Jamaica Kincaid; "Shit Cassandra Saw..." Gwen Kirby; "Collective Nouns For Humans In the Wild," Kathy Fish; "The Colonel," Carolyn Forché.

R--10/10: Workshop

Week 7

T--10/15: No class, Legislative Day

R--10/17: Workshop

Week 8

T--10/21: Poetry. Beyonce/Warsan Shire; Selected Poems by Morgan Parker; "This Is Just To Say" meme assignment

R--10/24: Workshop

Week 9

T--10/29: Kenzie Allen, Natalie Diaz, Joy Harjo

R--10/31: Workshop

Week 10

T--11/05: Poems in Conversation: Langston Hughes, Walt Whitman; Emma Lazarus and Selected Poems from 92Y's *A New Colossus*

R--11/07: Workshop

Week 11

T--11/12: Selected Poems by Sharon Olds, Camille Rankine, Sylvia Plath

R--11/14: Workshop

Week 12

T--11/19: Tiana Clark, Ross Gay, Hanif Abdurraqib

R--11/21: Workshop

Week 13

T--11/26: Workshop

R--11/28: No class, Thanksgiving

Week 14

T--12/3: Selections from *Bluets*, Maggie Nelson; Selected spoken word poetry

R--12/5: Workshop

Week 15

T--12/9: Selected pieces from *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*

R--12/12: Workshop and Last Day of Class!

Final Portfolio Due Tuesday, December 17—Place in my mailbox in the basement of the Lillian Vernon Writers' House by 2 p.m.